

**AC:** Adventuring is thirsty business. With that in mind, we've created the AC stat, short for Alcohol Content, which tracks just how drunk your character has become. Some might scoff and say that this is irrelevant, but when you figure that your adventures will pretty much always start in a tavern, it only makes sense that the AC stat exists.

The higher your AC, the faster you'll pass out. If at any time your Fortitude is lower than your AC, you'll pass out as if you were stone cold sober and had dropped to 0 or less.

**Gold:** Gold! Those pretty, round pieces of metal with the faces of various rulers stamped on them. It's how you'll afford powerful items, weapons, and armor. Gold will allow you to enjoy the sweet comfort of the White Griffon Tavern. It will buy you some drinks, and then it will buy you some more drinks. Most importantly, it's the way you and your fellow adventurers keep score. Nothing is more satisfying than leaving a dungeon with more gold than your bosom companions. Gold has some special rules that are covered in the Gold Section on page XX.

## Stat Points

When you build your character, you get 12 points to spend on your Primary Stats. As a reminder, the maximum at each skill is 6 and the minimum is 1 which makes the average 3.

## Skills

While stats are the innate qualities of your character, skills are things that your character has become good at through training. Your character will have obtained their skills through long hours of study, cultural immersion, out of sheer necessity during their previous adventures, and possibly through a correspondence class or two.

Skills can expand your horizons in amazing and unexpected ways, mostly because you can have just about any skill that you want. It's true! If you want a skill called, "Fantastical Scum Sucker" then you have it. If you think, "Best Sword Fighter in the World!" would be a handy skill to have, then you can take that, too.

The key thing with skills is this: You can always try to convince the Bartender that you can use a skill, no matter how ridiculous the application it is, provided it makes at least some vague kind of sense for the situation at hand. So, if you think your sword fighting skill will help you julienne a salad, make your case.

The Bartender, of course, has final say. If she says, "no!" emphatically while slamming her fist down, you're going to have to back down and accept her judgement.

That's why you're not going to get a laundry list of skills from us. We'd much rather have you use your imagination. Be creative, be fun, but if you end up with a skill you can't use because your character hasn't come across any Scum to Suck, don't come crying to us.

Skills fall into one of four categories, which are as follows:

**Help You:** A Help You skill does exactly what it sounds like. It benefits your character and no one else. Many of the standard adventuring skills, like Jumping, Climbing, Dodging, Swimming, Picking Locks, and Hiding are Help You skills.

**Help Others:** Not all skills are incredibly selfish. Some of them can actually help others. You use these skills to do something for another person, or a group of people. Any skill that keeps other people safe or supports them in some way is a good Help Others skill.

**Hurt Others:** These are the skills that you use to hurt monsters and, sometimes, other people. You can hurt them immediately, by attacking them; a short time in the future, by making and setting traps; or even emotionally, by using hurtful words and gestures. Anything that you can think of that will give the bad guys big boo-boos falls into this category.

**Cheating:** Cheating skills allow you to bend the rules of any game, even the rules of the game you're currently playing, *Critical!: Go Westerly*. If you can cook up a really good reason why a Cheating Skill will work in a given situation, go for it. You might amuse your Bartender enough so that she'll let you do what you want to do, because a happy Bartender is a benevolent Bartender.

Skills are rated from 1 to 3. This value represents the bonus you get when using a Skill.

### **For Example:**

Urist Axebeard has a Hurt Others skill called You Never Met an Axe You Couldn't Use to Kill Something (3). A huge door blocks Urist's progress through the dungeon, so he decides to chop it to pieces. Urist wants to use his You Never Met an Axe You Couldn't Use to Kill Something skill to increase his damage, because he's not worried about the door trying to dodge his attacks. The Bartender agrees and Urist's damage is now 5 instead of the base of 3.

Later on, a Little, Agile Monster annoys Urist. This time, Urist wants to use his You Never Met an Axe You Couldn't Use to Kill Something skill to add to his chance to chop up the Little, Agile Monster. This would add to his Strength of 5, giving him a total of 8. The Bartender agrees and sighs, knowing that things are going to go badly for her little creature.

When you make your character, you get 6 points for your skills. No skill can have a value higher than 3.

## **Habits**

Everyone has habits. They are the little things you do, without thinking, in your everyday life. Characters in *Critical!: Go Westerly* also have habits. They are quick and easy guidelines on how to act in certain situations, which gives you an opportunity to role-play your character more effectively.

Like Skills, Habits have a number associated with them. This number represents how ingrained this habit is, and how much it's going to affect your character. If you feel that a Habit will help you out in a certain situation then you can try to convince the Bartender that you can use the Habit. If she agrees it will give you a bonus but you can only use the Habit once per encounter.

However, Habits have a drawback. Because they are ingrained in your character, they can surface at inopportune times to cause problems. If you are in a situation where one of your Habits would cause a problem, the Bartender can use your Habit as a penalty. You can try to argue all you want, but usually it's pretty futile as the Bartender takes great pleasure in making sure that the things you think will make your character better will actually make them worse.

### **For Example:**

Angelique Doto has the habit Adrenaline Junkie (2). This Habit will be of great benefit anytime Angelique would like to leap into action or do something dangerous. Whenever this happens, she gets a +2 bonus.

However, if Angelique and her companions are parlaying with a powerful Lich, Angelique will have a really hard time just talking when she knows she could be doing something awesome. Her player may want to reason with the Lich for a variety of reasons, but the Bartender will gently remind her that "you know what? You really just want to leap into action!" and then will bestow a -2 penalty when she tries to negotiate with the Lich.

That situation will probably end up with Angelique whooping in excitement as she vaults over a Fireball.

Your character always starts with the Habit, Gotta Get the Gold (3). You get 3 points to spend on additional Habits. Like Skills, Habits have a maximum value of 3.

## Items

Items are specialized adventuring tools, weapons, and other gear. Items will either give fixed bonuses to any of your stats, or will give you a skill in which the value can only be used to increase the likelihood that you will succeed on certain types of rolls. Items can give you more Fortitude, they can allow you to deal more damage, they can give you greater Strength, Smarts, Sneak, or Smile, but that's all they get to do.

The benefit is that the Bartender doesn't really have to be convinced too often when you want to use an Item. If you have a Magic Sword that gives you a +2 to damage, you'll easily get a +2 to damage when you use that sword to make with the stabbing. However, you can never use your sword's bonus in any other way. It won't make your attacks more likely to land. It won't heal you. It won't light a campfire. It doesn't hand out candy to small children. It only gives you +2 to damage.

One thing that you need to be aware of concerning items is that they can be lost, broken, stolen, outdated, obsolete, ineffective, illusory, or anything else that might prevent you from using them. Monsters, as a general rule, will covet your items, and will happily use them against you if they can get their grubby paws on them.

You'll need to spend gold to purchase items. The bigger the item's modifier, the more it costs. It costs 2 gold per +1 modifier, but you have to buy each level every time you want to raise that modifier. For instance, you can buy a coat which adds a +1 to your This Coat Makes Me Look More Important Than I Am skill for 2 gold. If you want to buy the same Coat but have it add a +2 to your skill, you would have to spend 6 gold: That's 2 gold to make it +1 and an additional 4 gold to make it +2.

That's complicated, so we made a little chart that will help you figure out costs.

Modifier	Breakdown of Cost	Cost
+1	2	2 Gold
+2	2+4	6 Gold
+3	2+4+6	12 Gold
+4	2+4+6+8	20 Gold
+5	2+4+6+8+10	30 Gold

The pattern should be easy to follow after that. Keep in mind that items probably shouldn't go beyond +5 total modifier unless they're legendary items of awesome power.

If you already have an item and you want to make it even better, you'll have to pay gold to do so. That will be covered when we talk about Improving Yourself on page XX.

If you need some inspiration for your item purchases, feel free to consult the short list below. If that's not enough for you, we have a slightly longer list in the Bazaar section of the book.

<b>Item Name</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Cost</b>
10' Pole	Detect Traps (Helps Self +1)	2 Gold
50' of Rope	Rope Climbing (Helps Self +1)	2 Gold
Comfy Suit of Armor	-1 Opponent's Damage	2 Gold
Especially Well-Made Sword	+1 Damage Well Swung Sword (Hurt Others +1)	6 Gold
Impressive Adventurer Threads	+1 Smile	2 Gold
Magic Wand	+2 Damage	6 Gold
Magically Sharp Sword	+2 Damage Well Swung Sword (Hurt Others +1)	12 Gold
Thief's Tools	Locks go Bye-Bye (Helps Self +2) Disarm that Trap! (Helps Self +2)	20 Gold
Spiky Shield	-1 Opponent's Damage Shield Spikes to the Face (Hurt Others +1)	6 Gold

## Potions

We can hear the arguments brewing.\* Potions in their own section? Aren't they just like every other item? The short answer is that while they're similar to basic items, they have a few extra rules that require some explanation and, by extension, this section.

Potions all have one thing in common: they all start out with an alcoholic base. Sure, an alchemist could use water, but alcohol is better for leaching the magical properties of the other ingredients. Plus, you know, water is full of germs.

Few adventurers have an issue with the "secondary effects" caused by potions made predominantly of booze, but there is an obvious danger. Your potions may heal your wounds and give you special powers, but if you drink too many of them too quickly, you'll be face down in a stupor long before you reach the good part of your dungeon crawl.

\*Courtesy of the Potion of Punslinging. Yours for 4 gold!

There are three types of potions, and they're described below.

**Healing Potion:** These potions are the soothing salve that keep you conscious and keep your gold out of your friends' pockets. Every 2 gold you spend on a healing potion will allow it to restore 3 Fortitude. Unfortunately it also raises your Alcohol Content by 1. This effect is cumulative, so if you spend 4 gold on a healing potion it will heal 6 Fortitude and increase your AC by 2.

**For Example:**

Mabel has been taking a beating from a giant Vegetable Golem that's ransacking the salad bar of her favourite restaurant. She takes a moment to knock back a healing potion she had stowed in her hat. This potion set her back 6 gold, so it'll heal her 9 Fortitude and increase her Alcohol Content by 3.

**Boost Potion:** Sometimes, your regular stats just aren't going to cut it. You're not strong enough to tear that gate out of the wall, or you're not charming enough to attract that interesting individual on the other side of the bar. Luckily, there are boost potions that can help! All you have to do is drink one and they'll modify one stat, or give you a specific skill, until the end of the encounter. Every 2 gold you spend increases the modifier by +1 and adds 1 AC.

**For Example:**

Daphadiana is locked behind a portcullis and her friends are on the other side fighting an Undead Lich Fiend that has been plaguing their steps for the past year. She knows that the Lich can't stand upbeat music. Now if only she could get through the portcullis to aid her friends with a quick tempo theorb number!

She doesn't have enough strength to open up the gate, but she does have a Super Strong Now (6) Potion on her (a bargain at 12 Gold!). She drinks it and her Strength and Alcohol Content both go up by 6. She tears through the gate and begins to rock out!

**Magic Potion:** This is a catch-all category that covers every other type of potion. Magic potions let you do cool and exciting things, like fly, turn invisible, or shape shift. When you consume a potion, the effect is described by the Bartender, including any bonuses or penalties you might suffer from drinking the potion. Each magical effect costs 4 Gold and raises your Alcohol Content by 2.

### For Example:

Stelph opened a chest and found a Potion of Fire Breathing. What a lucky find, especially considering the Ice Elementals in the next room. Smiling, he chugs the potion and begins to belch fire, gaining +3 to his Attack and 2 to his Alcohol Content.

During the battle, Stelph tries to offer some helpful suggestions to Mabel. The Bartender says that Stelph has to make a roll because Mabel might not hear him since he's going to be giving the instructions with a helping of firebreath. This roll will be at a -3 penalty.

It can be hard to come up with your own potions on the fly, so we have provided a small list of them for inspiration. There are more potions in the Bazaar section, as well.

Potion Name	Effect	AC	Cost
Minor Healing Potion	+3 Fortitude	+1 AC	2 Gold
Potion of Avian Elixir	Turns you, but not your Items, into a bird	+2 AC	4 Gold
Potion of Combat Prowess	Gain Skill Super Sword Swinger +2 (Hurt Others)	+2 AC	4 Gold
Potion of Firebreathing	Gain Habit Fire Belcher +3	+2 AC	4 Gold
Potion of Invisibility	Gain Habit You Can't See Me +3	+2 AC	4 Gold
Potion of Keen Awareness	Gain Skill Keen, just like the title, eyesight (Help Self) +2 Can See Invisible Things	+4 AC	8 Gold
Potion of Ogrish Strength	+2 Strength	+2 AC	4 Gold

### Paying for Items, Potions and Increases

You can use the 10 gold provided by your Gold stat to buy yourself some Items, Potions or a single stat and/or skill bonus. The cost of a potion is listed above, but to increase a stat or skill by one costs 10 gold.

This bonus can be added to any primary or secondary stat.

## Well, That's It!

Now you're ready to go out adventuring! You might want to come up with a name, and a background and a history, but right now you're ready to go forth and brave the elements!

**WAIT! Aren't there Elves and Dwarves in your world?  
Can't I play one of those? Please!?**

Sure. Every fantasy kingdom has elves and dwarves kicking around, and Westerly is no different. For the most part, elves and dwarves live insular existences in their own communities, but there are always one or two particularly adventurous specimens willing to travel into the outside world and deal with humans. If you really want to be an elf or a dwarf, that's fine with us.

### Elves

Elves are tall, slender, haughty beings with pointed ears. They firmly believe that they are more knowledgeable, more graceful, more elegant, more refined, and more capable than any other creature on the planet. Anything that you can do, an elf has already done better. And then they wrote a poem about it.

They wear their hair long, mostly to show off how shimmery and elegant it is. Elvish hair comes in a wide assortment of colours, usually in the fluorescent spectrum. It has been said that if you see a group of elves from the sky, it looks like a bunch of walking flowers. If an elven child is born with brown or blond hair the other elves will quickly use magic to make sure that their hair becomes as chromatic as everyone else's.

Playing an elf provides no statistical bonus whatsoever. You will start with the same points as a human character. You're still better than they are, though, because you're an elf. Trust us.

### Dwarves

Dwarves are squat, solid people who stand about three feet in height. They are as sturdy and immovable as the rocky depths in which they live, both physically and mentally. It is said that once a Dwarf has decided how to feel about something, that's how they feel about it for pretty much the rest of their lives unless something really earth-shattering happens.

Unfortunately, dwarves tend to default to feeling rather negatively toward anyone who is not a dwarf or any object not of dwarven make. To make matters worse, if you are lucky enough to get a dwarf to think

highly of you, it only takes one or two missteps before they start to view you with suspicion. Conversely, if they think you're incompetent, it takes years of exemplary performance in order for that opinion to shift.

Dwarves, like elves, believe that they are superior to all the other races. Unlike elves, they don't feel the need to talk about how awesome they are. Anyone who looks at anything made by dwarves can easily see that they are superior, which is why dwarven crafts are so highly prized.

Unlike elves, dwarves believe in simple, sturdy things. Dwarven hair colour comes in all sorts of shades, so long as it's brown. Any dwarf with different colour hair either learns to like hats or is very quickly ostracized and exiled from the Dwarven city they call their home.

Being a Dwarf provides no statistical bonus whatsoever to the game. You will start with the same points as a human character. You don't need a numerical advantage, though. You can still briskly walk rings around them.